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**Listing of Claims**

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the subject application:

1. (currently amended) A magnetic resonance imaging apparatus comprising:

a gantry including a pair of upper magnet and lower magnet arranged oppositely and concentrically in a vertical direction, sandwiching a measurement space to which an object to be examined is inserted and a pair of columns for supporting the upper magnet installed over the outer parts of the upper magnet and the lower magnet in the vertical direction; and

a bed on which the object is placed, including a bed base and a top plate inserted to the measurement space,

wherein the pair of columns is oppositely arranged with respect to a central axis of the upper magnet and the lower magnet, and a cross sectional area of one column of the pair of columns is made smaller than that of the other, and

wherein the bed base is movable along the periphery of the gantry, the bed is disposed so that the top plate is inserted toward the center of the pair of magnets from in the side of the column with small cross sectional area with respect to a line perpendicular to a line connecting the centers of the pair of columns and passing through the center of the pair of magnets, and the top plate is moved along the longitudinal and the transverse direction thereof.

2. (original) A magnetic resonance imaging apparatus according to claim 1, wherein a width of the column with small cross sectional area in a direction perpendicular to a line connecting centers of the pair of columns is 1/2 or smaller of that of the other column in the identical direction.

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3. (previously presented) A magnetic resonance imaging apparatus according to claim 1, wherein either or both of the pair of columns has a shape bulged outward in the center.

Claim 4 (canceled).

5. (previously presented) A magnetic resonance imaging apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the direction of the line perpendicular to the line connecting the centers of the pair of columns and passing through the center of the pair of magnets intersects with a direction of the top plate insertion at an angle of 15 to 45 degrees.

6. (currently amended) A magnetic resonance imaging apparatus ~~according to claim 1,~~  
comprising:

a gantry including a pair of upper magnet and lower magnet arranged oppositely and concentrically in a vertical direction, sandwiching a measurement space to which an object to be examined is inserted and a pair of columns for supporting the upper magnet installed over the outer parts of the upper magnet and the lower magnet in the vertical direction; and

a bed on which the object is placed, including a bed base and a top plate inserted to the measurement space,

wherein the pair of columns is oppositely arranged with respect to a central axis of the upper magnet and the lower magnet, and a cross sectional area of one column of the pair of columns is made smaller than that of the other,

wherein the bed base is movable along the periphery of the gantry, the bed is disposed in the side of the column with small cross sectional area with respect to a line perpendicular to a

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line connecting the centers of the pair of columns and passing through the center of the pair of magnets, and the top plate is moved along the longitudinal and the transverse direction thereof, and

wherein the bed is disposed in the side of the column with small cross sectional area so that the top plate is inserted from a position in the vicinity of the column with large cross sectional area toward the center of the pair of magnets.

7. (currently amended) A magnetic resonance imaging apparatus according to claim 1 further comprising a bed fixing section ~~for determining the position of disposing the bed movable along the periphery of the gantry and~~ connected to a connecting section of the bed, wherein the bed fixing section is disposed so that the top plate is inserted from the predetermined position toward the center of the pair of magnets, and the bed is fixed by connecting the connecting section of the bed with the bed fixing section.

8. (previously presented) A magnetic resonance imaging apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the column with small cross sectional area has a substantially rectangular cross section, and its longitudinal direction corresponds to the diameter direction of the magnet.

9. (previously presented) A magnetic resonance imaging apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the side surface of the column with large cross sectional area facing the magnet center is tapered with its top pursed .

10. (previously presented) A magnetic resonance imaging apparatus according to claim 5, wherein the direction of the line perpendicular to the line connecting the centers of the pair of

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columns and passing through the center of the pair of magnets intersects with a direction of the top plate insertion at an angle of 25 to 35 degrees.